

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 USNATO 3983

WE ALL KNOW THE PROBLEMS OF OUR CONTACTS WITH PUBLIC
OPINION, THE DIFFICULTY OF DRAWING A LINE BETWEEN CONFI-
DENTIAL MATTERS WHICH COULD BE MADE PUBLIC WITHOUT DAMAGING
THE INTERESTS OF THE ALLIANCE AND THOSE THAT CANNOT. WE KNOW
THE DILEMMA OF PAINTING THE SITUATION SO GLOOMY THAT THE TAX-
PAYER SEES NO SENSE IN MAKING A SACRIFICE TO AVERT THE DANGER
OR ON THE OTHER HAND IN SUCH BRIGHT COLOURS THAT HE THINKS
EVERYTHING IS FINE AND NEEDS NO FURTHER EFFORT. SINCE WE
OURSELVES IN THIS ROOM ARE CONVINCED THAT THE TRUTH LIES
SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE, I THINK WE SHOULD EXPLAIN THE SITUATION
AS OBJECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE ALSO TO OUR PUBLIC.

OUR SECURITY CAN ONLY BE ASSURED IF WE KEEP UP OUR
EFFORT OR EVEN INCREASE IT IF THE OPPONENT INCREASES HIS.
IN THIS RESPECT I DON'T WANT TO CONCEAL THAT I AM SOMETIMES
A LITTLE WORRIED. NOT WITHOUT DIFFICULTIES THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT SO FAR HAS SUCCEEDED IN MAINTAINING AND EVEN IN-
CREASING ITS DEFENCE EFFORT. IN SPITE OF SERIOUS MONETARY
AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT FACED IN THE LAST
FEW YEARS, OUR CONTRIBUTION HAS STEADILY GROWN AND OUR RELATIVE
STRENGTH WITHIN THE ALLIANCE HAS GROWN ACCORDINGLY. OVER
A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME THIS, I THINK, IS NOT A HEALTHY
SITUATION FOR THE ALLIANCE. OUR PUBLIC IS AWARE THAT WE ARE -
GEOGRAPHICALLY SPEAKING - IN ONE OF THE MOST EXPOSE POSITIONS,
BUT IT IS ALSO AWARE OF THE SHIELD FUNCTION WE PERFORM FOR
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OTHERS. IF THE GAP BETWEEN OUR NATIONAL DEFENCE EFFORT
AND THAT OF OTHERS WIDENS MORE AND MORE, OUR PUBLIC

ONE DAY MIGHT ALSO ASKE THE QUESTION WHETER WE COULD
NOT SAVE ON DEFENCE. WE MIGHT THEN GET A CUMULATIVE
EFFECT OF OUTDOING EACH OTHER IN SAVING AT THE WRONG
PLACES WHICH COULD CREATE A VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION
FOR THE SECURITY OF ALL OF US. FOR WE MUST ALWAYS
REMEMBER THAT, AT LEAST AS WESTERN EUROPE IS CONCERNED,
NO SINGLE COUNTRY OF THIS ALLIANCE IS STRONG ENOUGH
ALONE, WE ARE ONLY STRONG TOGETHER.

I DON'T THINK THAT I HAVE TO CONVINCE THIS
COUNCIL THAT THE THREAT WTILL EXISTS. THE OPPONENT HAS
BECOME MUCH MORE REFINED IN HIS METHODS. HE HAS BEEN
USING THE POLICY OF DETENTE TO CONFUSE OUR PUBLIC,
BUT WE HAVE AMPLE PROOF THAT HE NEVER LOSES HIS FINAL
OBJECTIVE FROM SIGHT. THAT LITTLE POEM OF KIPLING
COMES TO MY MIND:

THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

WHEN HE STANDS UP AS PLEADING IN
WAVERING MAN-BRUTE GUISE

WHEN HE VEILS THE HATE AND CUNNING
OF HIS LITTLE EYES

WHEN HE SHOWS AS SEEKING QUARTER
WITH PAWS LIKE HANDS IN PRAYER

THAT IS THE TIME OF PERIL - THE TIME OF
THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

WHEN I THINK OF THE LATE THIRTIES MANY OF US
INSIDE AND OUTSIDE GERMANY WERE FOOLED EVEN THOUGH THE
METHODS USED BY HITLER OFTEN WERE MUCH MORE CLUMSY THAN
THOSE USED BY THE SOVIET UNION. BUT FOR MANY AT THAT TIME
IT WAS INOPPORTUNE, INCONVENIENT TO TAKE THE NECESSARY
DECISIONS, AND WE HAD TO PAY DEARLY FOR IT. LET US KEEP
THAT LESSON IN MIND WHEN WE DEAL WITH THE PRESENT SITUA-
TION, FOR THE OPPONENT WILL CERTAINLY EXPLOIT EVERY
WEAKNESS WE SHOW AND PENETRATE EVERY GAP THAT IS OPENING.
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HE IS COMPELLED TO DO SO BY HIS IDEOLOGY, AND FOR HIM TO
DEVIATE FROM THIS PATH CAN HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES. WE
MUST THEREFORE NEVER TEMPT HIM BY WEAKNESS. WE MUST ALWAYS
REMAIN STRONG AND, BY GOD, WE ARE IF WE ONLY WANT TO.

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